

Message Text

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ORIGIN EB-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 FRB-03

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CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 SS-15 L-03 AGRE-00 EUR-12

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TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: USINJC, ETRD, IN,US

SUBJECT: U.S.-INDIA ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL SUBCOMMISSION:
PREEG - DIXIT MEETING, SEPTEMBER 30

1. SUMMARY: INDIAN EMBASSY COMMERCIAL MINISTER DIXIT
CALLED ON DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY PREEG ON SEPT. 30 TO
DISCUSS INDIAN CONCERN ABOUT POSSIBLE NEW U.S. RESTRICTIONS
ON CERTAIN IMPORTS, ESPECIALLY SHRIMP AND LEATHER FOOTWEAR.
HE ALSO RAISED SUBJECT OF USG PURCHASES OF INDIAN PRODUCTS
UNDER RUPEE AGREEMENT AND ASKED FOR ASSISTANCE IN RESOLVING
ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS IN CONCLUDING SUCH SALES WITH U.S.
PROCUREMENT OFFICE IN MUNICH. END SUMMARY.

2. DIXIT RECENTLY HAD HEARD ABOUT SEVERAL PROTECTIONIST
MEASURES IN CONGRESS AND WAS PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT A
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SENATE BILL TO IMPOSE QUOTA AND TARIFF ON SHRIMP AND ALSO

ABOUT POSSIBLE NEW RESTRICTIONS ON LEATHER FOOTWEAR.

3. PREGG CONFIRMED THAT SOME LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS HAD BEEN PROPOSED RECENTLY WHICH REFLECTED PRIVATE INDUSTRY CONCERN IN CERTAIN AREAS. THE ADMINISTRATION OPPOSED SUCH MEASURES AND, GIVEN THE SHORT TIME REMAINING BEFORE ADJOURNMENT, THEY WERE NOT LIKELY TO PASS THIS SESSION.

4. PREGG EXPLAINED THAT THE SHRIMP BILL (S 3720), INTRODUCED BY SENATOR CHILES OF FLORIDA, HAD NOT BEEN REPORTED OUT OF SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE. THERE WAS NO NEW LEGISLATION PROPOSED ON LEATHER FOOTWEAR BUT SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE HAD PASSED RESOLUTION CALLING FOR NEW ITC INVESTIGATION. HE SAID LAST ITC REPORT CONCLUDED THERE WAS INJURY TO U.S. INDUSTRY AND THE PRESIDENT HAD MADE DECISION NOT TO IMPOSE NEW IMPORT CONTROLS; THE PRESIDENT INSTEAD RECOMMENDED EXPEDITED ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE.

5. DIXIT SAID INDIA WAS CONCERNED ABOUT SHRIMP BILL BECAUSE, ALTHOUGH SIMILAR BILL HAD FAILED TO PASS HOUSE PREVIOUSLY, HE FELT SENATE VERSION MIGHT HAVE BETTER CHANCE. HE HAD HEARD THAT THIS BILL WAS PRIMARILY DIRECTED AT MEXICO IN RETALIATION FOR MEXICO REFUSING FISHING RIGHTS TO U.S. SHRIMP BOATS, BUT HE SAID IT COULD HURT INDIAN SHRIMP EXPORTS TO U.S. AS WELL. PREGG RESPONDED THAT LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE IN MARCH WOULD PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY TO FOCUS ON MATTERS SUCH AS PROBLEM WITH MEXICO. BILATERAL QUESTION OF INDIAN SHRIMP EXPORTS COULD BE DISCUSSED WITH INDIA AT ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL SUBCOMMISSION MEETING IN SPRING, IF THIS BECAME AN ISSUE IN THE MEANTIME.

6. DIXIT RAISED SUBJECT OF HOW TO INCREASE USG PURCHASES OF INDIAN PRODUCTS FOR OFFICIAL USG USE UNDER AGREEMENT FOR USING U.S.-HELD RUPEES IN PARTIAL PAYMENT. THIS PROVISION IS IN PART II, 10 (C) OF THE U.S.-INDIA AGREEMENT ON THE USES OF PL-480 AND OTHER FUNDS. HE SAID THAT IN EFFORT TO PROMOTE MORE SUCH PURCHASES, INDIAN GOVERNMENT HAD CONTACTED U.S. PROCUREMENT OFFICE IN MUNICH, WHICH INDICATED IT WOULD HAVE TO INSPECT ANY GOODS BEFORE MAKING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PURCHASE DECISION. FOR THAT PURPOSE INDIAN GOVERNMENT HAD INVITED PROCUREMENT OFFICE REPRESENTATIVES TO VISIT INDIA AND OFFERED TO PAY THEIR EXPENSES. OFFER WAS DECLINED BECAUSE OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEM OVER RULES GOVERNING PAYMENT OF SUCH EXPENSES. DIXIT SAID INDIAN GOVERNMENT, NOT PRIVATE PARTIES, WOULD INVITE THE PROCUREMENT OFFICE REPRESENTATIVES.

7. PREGG SAID WE WOULD FOLLOW THIS UP TO SEE IF SOME FLEXIBILITY EXISTS THAT MIGHT PERMIT SUCH A VISIT, OR TO FIND OTHER WAYS TO PUBLICIZE AND CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR USG PURCHASE OF INDIAN PRODUCTS. ROBINSON

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